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Chicago Fire Football Club

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MAYOR LORI E. LIGHTFOOT, CHICAGO FIRE FOOTBALL CLUB, CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY BREAK GROUND ON NEW NEAR WEST SIDE TRAINING FACILITY

New 53,000 square-foot, two-story performance center and 5.5 training fields in the Roosevelt Square neighborhood on the Near West Side will create economic opportunities, employment, recreational activities, and affordable housing resources for the community

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, Chicago Fire FC Owner and Chairman Joe Mansueto, Alderman Jason Ervin (28th Ward), Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) CEO Tracey Scott, and Mary Baggett, President of the Local Advisory Committee for ABLA/Brooks Homes (Jane Addams Homes, Robert Brooks Homes, Loomis Courts, and Grace Abbott Homes) joined community members at the Jane Addams Family Resource Center to celebrate the groundbreaking of the Fire's new performance and training facility in the Roosevelt Square neighborhood on the Near West Side.

"The Chicago Fire is a top tier football club and the team and its players deserve a top tier training facility," said Mayor Lightfoot. "I am also pleased that the Near West Side community will benefit from the job opportunities, recreational space, and housing support that CFFC has committed to providing as part of this development."

The new facility will feature a 53,000 square-foot, two-story performance center, two-and-a-half hybrid grass pitches, and three synthetic turf pitches, providing a world-class training environment for the Fire's professional and Academy players and staff. The hybrid grass pitches will feature a hydronic heating system, and an insulated dome will cover one of the turf pitches from November to March each year.

The new facility will be built on CHA land and, as part of a long-term lease agreement, the Fire will finance the development of the multi-million-dollar facility and provide



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an \$8 million community investment to be used for the rehabilitation and preservation of nearby CHA housing and the creation of indoor and outdoor community spaces. Additionally, the Fire will provide long-term employment opportunities for community members, resources for minority and women-owned businesses, free sports programming for local youth, community green spaces, and more.

The lease is estimated to generate \$40 million in revenue for CHA over the next 40 years, and CHA will use the proceeds to invest in its housing mission, including ABLA Brooks Homes, Loomis Courts, and Williams Jones. Construction on the training facility is anticipated to begin later this spring.

“I am excited to join Mayor Lightfoot, CHA, and the Chicago Fire Football Club to explore using this open space to support affordable housing, employment, and recreation on the Near West Side,” said Alderman Jason Ervin, 28th Ward. “I am committed to working closely with the Fire and the residents of the 28th Ward to ensure that this opportunity for economic investment creates a long-term positive impact on our community.”

This groundbreaking comes after an extensive public engagement process to discuss the proposal, including community meetings hosted or co-hosted by CHA, Department of Planning and Development (DPD), the Fire, and Alderman Jason Ervin. The Fire met directly with multiple community organizations during the planning process.

“We are thrilled to celebrate the groundbreaking of the Club’s new performance center, which is the result of years of dedication and collaboration with local residents, the City of Chicago, Chicago Housing Authority and other key partners,” said Chicago Fire FC Owner and Chairman Joe Mansueto. “This new performance center will strengthen our ability to recruit and develop the best talent at the professional and Academy levels. Moreover, this facility will serve as a community asset, offering valuable resources and opportunities that will benefit multiple generations of Chicagoans.”

“At CHA, our goal is to help families unlock their economic power and seniors thrive. We’ve seen time and time again that all residents—including those who use housing subsidies—benefit from mixed-use, mixed-income communities where housing is located alongside quality public schools, outdoor recreation, jobs and career opportunities, healthcare access, grocery stores, and more,” said CHA CEO Tracey Scott. “That is why we are so excited about this new partnership with the Chicago Fire, which will secure substantial funds to improve aging public housing at ABLA Brooks and Loomis Courts while creating employment opportunities that will benefit



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this community for years to come. It will serve as a catalyst for future growth on the Near West Side.”

The new performance center and training facility will create an economic anchor that provides employment, recreational opportunities, and affordable housing resources for the community. The site was previously occupied by portions of CHA’s former ABLA Homes, which is already in the process of being replaced by the mixed-income Roosevelt Square development as part of CHA’s ongoing commitment to develop mixed-income, mixed-use housing. This includes the recent groundbreaking of Roosevelt Square Phase 3B on January 23rd, 2023.

The Chicago Fire Football Club was founded in 1997 on the 126th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire and recently kicked off its 26th season in Major League Soccer. The Fire have won six major domestic championship titles, including the 1998 MLS Cup, the 1998, 2000, 2003 and 2006 Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cups, as well as the 2003 Supporters’ Shield. The Club’s charitable arm, the Chicago Fire Foundation, was recognized as ESPN’s 2019 Sports Humanitarian Team of the Year. The Fire plays their home matches at historic Soldier Field. For more information, visit chicagofirefc.com.

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